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Provisional

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Wednesday, 15 May 2013, 11 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Menan	(Togo)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Oyarzábal
	Australia	Ms. King
	Azerbaijan	Mr. Sharifov
	China	Mr. Tian Lin
	France	Mr. Araud
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	Luxembourg	Ms. Lucas
	Morocco	Mr. Kadiri
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park Yong Min
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Rwanda	Mr. Nduhungirehe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Tatham
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2013/261)

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The meeting was called to order at 11.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Central African Republic

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic (S/2013/261)

The President (*spoke in French*): Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of the Central African Republic and Chad to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Nicolas Tiangaye, Prime Minister of the Central African Republic, and request the Protocol Officer to escort him to his seat at the Council table.

Mr. Nicolas Tiangaye, Prime Minister of the Central African Republic, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Margaret Vogt, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2013/261, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic.

I now give the floor to Ms. Vogt.

Ms. Vogt: I wish to commend the Security Council for its dedicated attention to the situation in the Central African Republic since the beginning of the conflict there in December 2012, and especially following the coup d'état on 24 March against the Government of François Bozizé and the attendant degradation of security in the whole country. The Council's deliberations have been followed with much interest within the country and in the region. Expectations are high among the people of the Central African Republic for the outcome of this particular meeting, since there is a growing sense of despair among the population, who see no immediate reprieve to the ordeal that presently confronts them. There are expectations that the international community will show solidarity with their plight and decide on some clear steps to bring an end to the impunity with which armed groups have unleashed a reign of terror on the entire population.

The report before the Council (S/2013/261) provides an analysis of the situation in the Central African Republic since the launch of the Séléka offensive in December. It underlines the impact of the rebellion on the people; the State's capacity and infrastructure; on security and human rights; on the humanitarian situation, especially where medical matters are concerned; and on access to food, basic needs and services, as well as the high risk of famine if the current situation persists. It also analyses the regional implications of the Séléka rebellion.

The Secretary-General stresses in the report that even at the best of times the State capacity and infrastructure of the Central African Republic were rudimentary, while health services were at emergency levels similar to situations seen in countries that have been in conflict for a long time. Now, even those facilities have all but disappeared. An already challenging human rights environment, marked by systemic violations of rights even by law enforcement officers, has collapsed into a state of anarchy and total disregard for international law as elements of Séléka have turned their vengeance against the population.

Indiscriminate and often targeted killings, rampant rape, assaults on the innocent population, the flagrant recruitment of children as soldiers, the looting of homes, not just of the rich but even of already struggling citizens — not even the SOS village was spared, nor were churches or convents. These acts continue, almost two months since Séléka took over the reins of power. The leadership is unable or unwilling either to control the ranks of the militia groups or to rein in local commanders.

The leaders of the region have strongly mobilized to fill the security vacuum that the rebellion created and try to contain the situation in the Central African Republic, as the country appears to have become a safe haven for different foreign rebel forces seeking to exploit the natural resources for which the Central African Republic is known. Public evidence shows that strip mining of the diamond and gold resources of the Central African Republic have exponentially expanded in areas controlled by Séléka since the rebellion began.

Further complicating the picture is the growing insecurity in the neighbourhood as the conflict now poses a direct threat to the security of its neighbours, especially the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad and Cameroon. These serious threats to the peace and security of the people of the Central African Republic and the Central African region make the re-establishment of security and the rule of law in the Central African Republic the highest priority issue.

The various summits held in Libreville, N'Djamena and most recently Brazzaville laid out solid political ground rules for the new regime in Bangui to follow, as well as a clear road map of tasks that must be accomplished to enable the restoration of a democratic dispensation in the Central African Republic. First, all hostilities must cease and the security must be restored throughout the territory of the Central African Republic; and secondly, constitutional order must be restored, pursuant to the January Libreville Agreements, with the Prime Minister assuming executive powers, while the self-proclaimed President Michel Djotodia heads the National Transitional Council and is Head of the Transition.

The scenario, as implemented by the de facto authorities, suggests a different setting. The Transitional Council, which was supposed to be representative of all political persuasions in the country and to assume the legislative role of the National Assembly, fell short of this expectation as controversy surrounded the procedure through which its members were nominated; hence the decision of the Heads of State at the 18 April summit at N'Djamena to expand the membership of that body to 135. The transitional arrangement is to last for a period of not more that 24 months, ending with elections in which the leaders of the transition would not be eligible to present themselves.

While Mr. Djotodia openly declared his acceptance of the decisions of the Heads of State of the Economic Community (ECCAS) of Central African States, he has proceeded to do the contrary. He insists on his role as President, constantly referring to the decrees naming him President and his appointment of the Prime Minister, whom he claims to have the power to remove, contrary to Libreville. He continues to run the country by presidential decrees.

The international community, especially the African Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie and the Security Council, as well as many Member States bilaterally, have firmly declared their support for the ECCAS political framework for the Central African Republic. However, if this is to work, a number of important measures would have to be taken. The distinctive roles and responsibilities of the executive Prime Minister and the Head of the Transitional Government would have to be defined in the framework of a transitional charter that would lay the ground rules for engagement during the period of the transition.

With respect to human rights, the Séléka offensive destroyed much of Central African Republic's justice system. In the 10 jurisdictions of the Republic, Séléka elements have destroyed most of the infrastructure that supported the justice system, including courthouses, appeals courts, court dossiers, prisons, prison registries and prosecutor files. The justice system, including prisons, will need to be rebuilt entirely, after vast resources have been spent on it through the Peacebuilding Fund. The destruction of administrative files related to birth and citizenship will undoubtedly create a problem during the registration of voters for the upcoming elections.

The Séléka offensive dismantled the policing architecture. National security and defence forces — the gendarmerie, police and national army — have disintegrated, and despite repeated calls for them to resume their duties, to date only a small number of the police and national armed forces officers have resumed their functions.

The current crisis underscores the urgency need for security sector reform and to create an effective and inclusive security sector capable of providing security throughout the country. Broader security sector reform should be based on political consensus. It should include the restoration of State authority, the collection of small arms and light weapons, and community recovery programmes, as well as the reintegration of ex-combatants into formal security and defence forces.

The abuses and violations committed by Séléka combatants and other armed elements, including cases of rape, maiming, recruitment of children and forced marriages, are a source of grave concern in terms of the protection of civilians. They constitute serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Secretary-General have

expressed their concern about the deteriorating security situation in the Central African Republic.

It is critical that the Council unequivocally pronounce itself on the need for these abuses to stop now and for perpetrators to be held individually accountable for their actions. We believe that the time is ripe for the Council to consider the imposition of individual sanctions against the architects and perpetrators of these gross violations. We do not want a desperate population to be left with no choice but to take the law into its own hands. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is also closely monitoring developments in the Central African Republic, and the Prosecutor of the ICC has issued a statement warning that the crimes committed against civilians were under close scrutiny by her Office. We believe that the Council needs to send a similar message.

On the humanitarian situation, the latest crisis has exacerbated an already difficult situation for the population of the Central African Republic. Human rights violations against civilians and population movements continue. Over 49,000 refugees have now been registered in neighbouring countries since December, primarily in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Cameroon and the Republic of the Congo. We should not forget that the population of the entire Central African Republic is only 4.5 million. Substantial numbers of refugees continue to arrive in these countries. In addition to the estimated 173,000 displaced since December, another 33,000 persons had already been displaced, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons to over 200,000.

The number of violent attacks dramatically increased in the first quarter of 2013 as a result of persisting insecurity in the country. More than 60 per cent of those attacks are attributed to armed groups. Since the beginning of 2013, at least one person has been attacked every day.

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 60 per cent of rural inhabitants, who depend upon agriculture for their livelihoods, are affected by the current crisis. More than 80,000 people, including 57,000 children under the age of 5, are estimated to be at risk of severe food insecurity during the upcoming lean season, from now until September. Those figures are likely to increase with the rise in food prices triggered by the crisis. If seeds are not distributed during the current planting season, coupled with the increase in prices revealed by recent assessments in Bangui, there could be a risk of basic food shortages. That could eventually lead to acute food and nutritional insecurity in both rural and urban areas. With schools closed or occupied and teachers absent, at least 656,000 children currently have no access to education.

Difficult humanitarian access due to insecurity and limited road networks is the number one constraint for reaching those in need of assistance. Access has become severely curtailed since December amid the breakdown of law and order, with many humanitarian offices and warehouses around the country having been looted. While all parties have in principle agreed to facilitate humanitarian access, insecurity is limiting humanitarian actors' ability to reach those in need of assistance, including internally displaced persons, host communities and victims of human rights violations.

Despite those constraints, United Nations agencies and programmes are organizing joint assessment missions to the field to identify needs and the humanitarian impact of the crisis. Missions to some provinces have revealed that the humanitarian situation is worsening in the areas of health, water and sanitation, nutrition and protection, food security and education. The most urgent needs are in the food-security sector, where households have altered their diet by changes to their food sources, as well as the need for garbage disposal. Further assessments are planned in the coming weeks.

Additional funding is urgently required to support the humanitarian response capacity. The annual humanitarian appeal for the Central African Republic, totalling $129 million, was 29 per cent funded as of 10 May. It was estimated in March that an additional $42 million was required to respond to the new needs triggered by the crisis. That amount is likely to increase further.

I believe that there is an urgent need to help restore security and stability in the Central African Republic. That should be done by deploying a neutral security force that would contain the current state of anarchy and force the rebel elements to conform to the security framework laid down in Libreville. That framework provides that all security forces be cantonned/regrouped, disarmed, demobilized and screened for absorption into a reformed security force. The Security Council and the entire international community must act quickly to protect the people of the Central

African Republic from the assault they are under by armed groups. The situation in Bangui is particularly pressing, as the city has the largest population concentration — approximately 1.5 million out of a total population of 4.5 million in the entire country. But that effort should not be limited to Bangui.

The presence of such a neutral stabilization force, together with the close political support of the follow-up committee established by the region and the just-established international contact Group to support the transition, is critical in providing a security and political blanket that would enable the authorities to implement the Libreville Agreements and would allow the Prime Minister to play his role as executive head of Government. The international effort would also help to ensure that assistance would not be abused to fuel impunity and authoritarianism.

We welcome the current initiative by the Economic Community of Central African States to expand its force to 2,000, which requires the urgent support of the international community. It will also be critical for the regional force to review its strategic objectives and concept of operations to give the force some teeth. A meeting is taking place today precisely to look into the issue. That short-term initiative needs to be quickly followed up by an expanded regional force, possibly coordinated by the African Union and with the support of the international community. However, for the very immediate term, a bridging arrangement is required to stop the current carnage.

Through the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, the Organization has worked closely with the region in defining the parameters for the transition, based on solid democratic principles and legality. Experience has taught us that such principles are not merely words, but critical foundations for sustainable peace and security. To establish a credible and enduring political framework following the transition, the foundations must be laid down now. Crucial transitional tasks — such as establishing election-management bodies; defining the electoral constituency; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; security sector reform; regionalization; developing rule-of-law and justice mechanisms; social and economic development and so on — require a representative body that reflects the interests of the entire society, otherwise the transition may result in another round of conflict. That is why we insist on the Libreville Agreements as the legal basis.

For the United Nations, the role of the Prime Minister as the juridical face of the transition is critical, as that position was the product of an agreement to which everyone had subscribed. We strongly believe that we should not encourage a system of impunity in a situation through which a democratic order is overturned by force of arms, even when confronted with serious governance challenges. The Libreville Agreements were designed to address some of the grievances put forward by the rebels while respecting the democratic framework. The coup d'état overturned this transitional process towards and forcefully imposed a new order. It is critical that we support the region, ECCAS and the African Union, and regional actors in re-establishing the basic principles of Libreville.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Vogt for her briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Tiangaye (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour for me to speak before the Security Council. I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. I wish to assure you of the full support of my delegation during your term of office. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Rwanda, for the work he accomplished on his watch in April.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/261) to the Council represents an opportunity for me and my country an opportunity to convey the gratitude of the Central African Republic to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for the continued support of the United Nations for the quest for peace, stability and development in this highly fragile State, beset by almost ongoing instability. Here we wish also to thank the Special Representative, Ms. Margaret Vogt, as well as all of her team.

The report before us is clear and concise in its description of the situation on the ground in the Central African Republic as it was previously and is now. An tragedy of unprecedented scope is unfolding before our eyes today in this State of 4.6 million inhabitants, and we take note of this. The Central African crisis, which has long been forgotten, must once again take centre stage and be included on the agenda of the Security Council.

The tragedy that is gripping the Central African Republic at all levels is characterized by disturbances to the public order, violence, abuses, summary executions, rape, the recruitment of child soldiers, and crimes against World Heritage wildlife, exemplified by the incidents of poaching in Dzanga Sangha reserve last week, in which more than 20 elephants were killed. It has inevitably had a humanitarian impact, including increased insecurity.

Since the taking and looting of a number of cities in the province, up until the entry of Séléka troops into the capital of Bangui on 24 March, the city of Bangui has witnessed almost three weeks of light and heavy fire, which has led to a massive displacement of people within and outside the city. It has been characterized by insecurity caused by the looting, rape, destruction and killings perpetrated by lawless elements of the Séléka. That also applies to those charged with protecting public and private establishments. Lack of security on the roadways and in regions has made the circulation of persons and goods impossible, thus hampering economic recovery.

The continuing insecurity at the level of strategic infrastructure, such as fuel-storage facilities in Kolongo and facilities related to water and electricity distribution and to the dredging activities of the Ubangi river; the systematic looting of documents and bureaucratic materials from administrations, of pharmaceutical products and of medical and biomedical material from hospitals; and the destruction of production facilities, which has made it impossible for most companies to pay their tariffs and taxes to the State, poses a threat to the stability resulting from the Libreville Agreements and the decisions of successive summits of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) held in N'Djamena. All of those violations disrupt the daily lives of people and provide a particularly painful and disturbing illustration of the situation.

Nevertheless, generally speaking, the process of the implementation of the structures recommended by the most recent Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in N'Djamena on April 18, has been moving forward in a manner satisfactory to Central Africans with respect to the recommendations that have been made.

However, the situation remains worrisome, despite the goodwill of the Government and the efforts of the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic (MICOPAX). Indeed, certain incidents that have been noted continue to be worrisome for national and international public opinion and could hinder the ongoing efforts of the Government and the international community to achieve security, peace and stability in the Central African Republic and the subregion.

Given that chaotic situation, which has caused deep upheaval within the State, what do we intend to do, and how shall we do it?

First and foremost, on the institutional and political fronts, pursuant to the recommendations of the Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government of ECCAS held in N'Djamena on April 18, in the coming days, following broad consultations, a Government will be established, a Government of national unity.

Although the National Transitional Council was supposed to have 105 members, the ECCAS subregional authorities increased it to 135, so as to ensure the broadest representation possible in the transition management process.

The illegally elected Office of the National Transitional Council should be abolished in the coming days so as to adapt to current circumstances. Here I would recall that the outlines of this political transition were sketched out by ECCAS during the various Summits held in N'Djamena on 3 and 18 April, as well as in Brazzaville, on 3 May.

It is clearly stated in the N'Djamena declaration that all actors involved in managing the transition, including the Head of the transition, the Prime Minister, the Ministers and the members of the Office of the Transitional National Council cannot present their candidature during the next presidential elections.

We would note that the international community has unequivocally condemned that forcible and unconstitutional change. However, ECCAS noted the election by the National Transitional Council of Mr. Michel Djotodia as the President of the Republic and conferred upon him the title of Head of the Transition. ECCAS also recognized the legitimacy of the Prime Minister, because he was the head of the Government of National Unity established under the Libreville Agreements of 11 January 2013.

Concerning the security situation and the rule of law, as we have indicated, the collapse of the State and the lack of any defence or security forces have led

to a security vacuum resulting in total anarchy, with widespread violence and serious violations of human rights, including the looting of public and private property, arbitrary arrests and detentions, sexual violence against women and children, torture, rape, targeted killings, the recruitment of child soldiers and other atrocities committed by uncontrolled Séléka elements and unidentified groups.

Nor was the United Nations spared, as residences of both national and international staff were looted and pillaged, and vehicles stolen. Bangui is witnessing an alarming situation, where the looting and pillaging of houses has reached an unprecedented and unimaginable level, setting the country back several decades. All of this has been accompanied by car theft and armed robbery. Schools and many businesses in Bangui have not fully reopened because of insecurity.

Outside Bangui, security conditions continue to deteriorate as Séléka elements engage in vandalism, violations of human rights and attacks on the civilian population. It should be noted that the looting primarily targets non-Muslims and spares Muslims. This situation is a source of resentment in the Christian communities and inflames religious tensions.

Finally, the climate of insecurity in the Central African Republic affects the stability of the entire subregion.

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) thrives in lawless areas and remains a threat to security and the rule of law, having killed at least seven people and carried out kidnappings in the reporting period. At the same time, a leader of the group has been killed and some of its fighters have defected. Uganda had at one point announced the suspension of its monitoring activities in LRA area of activities following a statement by the Head of State of the transition, but reversed its decision following an agreement reached between the various institutions engaged in the hunt for Joseph Kony and his men.

We note that the Séléka offensive destroyed a large part of the country's judicial system and administrative infrastructure, including town halls. That will ultimately raise questions about voting lists in the electoral process ahead. The Séléka offensive has destroyed law enforcement. The forces of defence and security — the gendarmerie, the police and the army — have disintegrated. Despite repeated calls for the old forces of defence and security to go back to work, so far only a small number of officers of the army and police have rejoined the ranks. Although Séléka took control of all political and military levers of the country after seizing power, it cannot restore order.

Despite the efforts of the Government in the fields of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform, its results have not been commensurate with its investment. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), which had deployed nearly 700 men, has seen the number of its personnel rise to 2,000, hence the urgency of deploying them fully equipped and trained with a mandate to use force. The reform of the security sector, which was long on standby, should be activated in order to lay the groundwork for creating new forces of defence and security.

With respect to the protection of human rights, the precarious situation deteriorated even further during the conflict, with summary executions and targeted attacks motivated by religious or tribal affiliation, violence against women and girls, the recruitment of child soldiers, and so on. In short, human rights violations of every stripe have been committed, and we must find ways and means of stopping them.

The humanitarian situation deteriorated after Bangui fell. Nearly 47,000 people have fled the country to seek refuge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Congo, Cameroon and Chad. Nearly 1.5 million have been displaced internally. The absence of a humanitarian corridor, insecurity and the looting of property, warehouses and vehicles belonging to non-governmental organizations complicate the work of relief and other assistance to the people.

This chaotic situation leads us to ask the Security Council to inscribe the situation in the Central African Republic on its agenda in order to ensure that it will no longer be a forgotten crisis. Faced with the dissolution of the army, and in order to save a people in great distress and before the necessary deployment of the 2,000-man force of the ECCAS Mission de Consolidation de la Paix — which we would like to see opened to non-member States of the ECCAS space — we ask France, which is endowed with a clear United Nations mandate, to intervene by force to disarm Séléka, whose abuses the Central African people have been compelled to endure.

We also ask the European Union and the African Union to do everything possible to fund and/or

provide other resources to the forces that would intervene under that mission. We ask the United Nations to appoint a special rapporteur to investigate violations of human rights in the Central African Republic in order to determine the extent of the crimes committed and prosecute their perpetrators in national and international courts alike, and to assist in the opening of humanitarian corridors in order to allow humanitarian actors to provide relief and assistance to displaced persons and other populations. We call on the international community to mobilize to provide the significant emergency relief that is critical to the survival more than 1.5 million victims waiting for relief.

Finally, we suggest that a Chairman be appointed to the currently leaderless Central African Republic configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, by mutual agreement with the Central African authorities. Once we have resolved the security situation, even if only partially, we can begin to rebuild the State and to consider calmly preparing the transparent and credible elections that everyone wants.

Before concluding, allow me to convey the heartfelt gratitude of my Government to the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the International Organization of la Francophonie, the ECCAS States, France, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Luxembourg, Australia, China, Japan, Germany, the Republic of Korea, the Kingdom of Morocco, Uganda, and all bilateral and multilateral partners that have always supported the Central African Republic in its relentless pursuit of peace and stability.

To all those who have been overtaken by fatigue, we ask them to continue despite it all to believe in the Central African Republic and to act on its behalf. Helping the Central African Republic is to continue stabilizing the subregion of Central Africa. Helping the Central African Republic is to consolidate peace in Africa. Helping the Central African Republic is to fulfil the international community's duty of solidarity vis-à-vis one of its members clinging to life, peace and the fulfillment his people.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chad.

Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the presidency of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). I wish at the outset to welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Nicolas Tiangaye, Prime Minister of the Central African Republic. I wish to express to my congratulations and admiration for the sacrifice he is making to save his country.

I should also like to welcome the presence of Ms. Margaret Vogt, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Central African Republic. I have taken note of her imporant and moving statement on the situation in the Central African Republic.

I should like to quote His Excellency Mr. Idriss Deby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad in his capacity as the current Chairman of of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), speaking to his peers on 18 April at N'Djamena during an extraordinary ECCAS summit on the situation in Chad:

> "The Central African Republic is like a wound in the heart of Central Africa. Despite all remedies proferred to resolve the crisis in the country, the wound only appears to have been healed. We need to engage seriously to end the situation of recurring instability — this time decisively, I hope."

We must ensure that the wound does not turn into gangrene and infect the entire subregion. The tell-tale signs of such contagion are already present, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has clearly spelled out. Since 24 March, the security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic, which had already been worrisome enough, has deteriorated considerably. Uncontrolled armed groups, comprised of many thousands of men, continue to plunder, extort and commit atrocities across the extent of the country's territory. The country's people await in distress, in vain, concrete action by the international community and the Economic Community of Central African States in better protecting them.

The international community has condemned the unconstitutional change that occurred in the Central African Republic, as has the Economic Community of Central African States in not recognizing the self-proclaimed President. Subsequently, realpolitik led ECCAS to advocate a plan for ending the crisis that, while restoring some level of law and order, would take into account the realities on the ground. The institutions for an 18-month transition have therefore been put in place, including a road map for the transitional Government in order to redress the situation. The

political Agreements signed at Libreville on 11 January set out the core commitments for the transition period.

As the Council is aware, following the coup, an extraordinary ECCAS summit was held at N'Djamena on 3 April. In addition to ECCAS member States, participants also included His Excellency Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa, His Excellency Mr. Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin, as well as the United Nations, the European Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie. That meeting not only condemned the seizure of power by force in the Central African Republic, but it also called the leader of the Séléka coalition, Mr. Michel Djotodia, the self-proclaimed President, to comply with the Libreville Agreements.

At the end of the summit, the ECCAS Heads of State proposed setting up a panel including all the forces of the country capable of acting as the executive branch and a constituent assembly. That is to take place in the context of widespread involvement on the part both of the Libreville signatories and civil society or political elements. The principle of supporting the transition through a monitoring committee and the establishment of an International Contact Group, including regional and international organizations and bilateral and multilateral partners, was also agreed to. All stakeholders in the Central African Republic, including the self-proclaimed President, have unconditionally accepted the road map proposed by the ECCAS summit.

Against that backdrop, according to the most recent information available to us, on the basis of broad consultations, a National Transitional Council has been put in place to act as a constituent assembly that involves all of the country's stakeholders. As the Prime Minister has emphasized, this constituent assembly's main task is to draft a constitution in preparation for elections within 18 months. The National Transitional Council elected the head of the Séléka coalition as President for the transitional period. However, the Council should be expanded to make it much more legitimate and better represent the people of the Central African Republic.

Prime Minister Tiangaye, appointed under the Libreville Agreements, has had his term extended to include greater powers, and he cannot be removed during the transition period. If circumstances require, the transitional President and the Prime Minister may, by mutual agreement, carry out a reorganization of the Government. The transitional President, Prime Minister and other members of the transitional Government cannot stand in the next elections. Under the terms of the transition, a constitutional referendum and parliamentary and presidential elections will be organized on the basis of a legal system and a consensual time table will be established for a return to undisputed democratic and constitutional order. It is clear that nothing is possible without security for persons and property, or without the material and financial resources required by the transitional authorities to carry out their duties. It is precisely to address such issues that ECCAS agreed to establish an International Contact Group, which held its first meeting in Brazzaville 3 May.

On the security front, it is imperative to neutralize the armed gangs. To that end, we must bear in mind the ECCAS N'Djamena declaration of 18 April, which emphasizes the need for the cantonment of all uncontrolled armed elements. It should also be recalled that, in order to ensure a minimum of security for the country, the Central Africa Multinational Force should be increased to 2,000 troops, while the international community should be strongly urged to support MICOPAX with material and financial resources in order to increase its workforce and enhance its effectiveness. The Commission of the African Union is called upon to take appropriate measures to evaluate MICOPAX needs in the areas of staff, equipment and financing. The task of generating forces based on a concept of operations and a concept of logistics support should have the support of Africa and the entire international community.

The international community, in particular the Security Council, has a duty to extend solidarity and assistance to the Central African Republic, which is in dire straits given the political and social chaos that prevails in the country.

In the meantime, the Economic Community of Central African States is doing everything in its power to aid the people of the Central African Republic. Its modest forces are working on the ground to help the transitional authorities reduce insecurity as much as possible. It is imperative that Africa and the international community as a whole commit to concrete action alongside ECCAS and get behind the transition in order to help people in danger.

In conclusion, I would like to inform the Council that the transitional President of the Central African Republic has just begun a visit to the countries of

the subregion, starting with Chad. On that occasion, President Deby Itno, in his capacity as the current Chairman of ECCAS, urged the transitional President to scrupulously respect his commitments, particularly that of ensuring that order and security are rapidly restored and human rights respected.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.